
5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private	Number of Resources within Property	
	Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property: Building		
	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> building(s)
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources in Missoula, Montana 1864 - 1940.	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> TOTAL

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:	Current Functions:
Commerce/trade: specialty store Transportation: animal-powered	Commerce/trade: specialty store Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification:	Materials:
Other: 20th Century Commercial	foundation: stone, concrete walls: brick roof: asphalt other: n/a

Narrative Description

The Studebaker Building is a two-story commercial building located on West Main Street within Missoula's historic central business district. The adjoining buildings are one-story historic buildings, one of which has been renovated, with subsequent loss of design and materials integrity.

Exterior

A rectangular, two-story, masonry, vernacular commercial building, the Studebaker Building has a flat roof, corner crenelated parapet, and concrete foundation. The front facade of the building is stretcher bond high-fire brick, with four second-story bays and four first-floor bays. The distinctive corner, crenelated, polychrome parapet (and the remainder of the front facade) has a header cornice. The corner parapet also has an inset polychrome masonry panel. The second-story windows are four sets of three-part fixed industrial steel-frame windows with 12 (3x4) lights in each part. A header belt course (at the bottom) and a vertical stretcher course (at the top of the windows) serve as decorative sills and lintels, respectively. The first and second stories are separated by an inset stretcher polychrome panel running the length of the front facade. A vertical stretcher belt course runs above the first level bays. The west side of the second story has a row of wood-frame, double-hung windows with header relief arches.

The street level has four bays--a west-end, frame, multipanel and light, hinged garage door; two sets of large, paired, plate glass windows; and a centered, wood-frame entryway. The entryway has two wood-frame swinging doors with three-quarter length windows. Four-part inset plywood panels are located above the large window bay and a two-part panel above the centered doorway in molded wood frames. A rounded canvas awning is located above the entryway door. The front facade appears to be original and is in good condition.

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The rear of the building has three second-story bays and four first-level bays, including one masonry framed aluminum garage door. The upper windows are three sets of metal framed 3x4 multilights and header sills. The windows on the first story are the same except that they do not have header sills, and terminate above a three-foot-high concrete base wall.

Interior

The interior of the building consists of two street-level front retail establishments--a barber shop and a book store--a westside driveway, and an open rear automobile service area. The upstairs is one open room, with masonry walls.

The first floor commercial establishments are accessed by an interior foyer-hallway, with separate wood-frame wood door (with full-length window) entries to both. The bookstore has sheet rock walls and a rear mezzanine level office that is accessed by an interior staircase. The ceiling in the hallway, bookstore, and the barber shop is pressed metal with decorative 12-inch squares. The hallway, which has sheet rock walls and wood frame fixed windows looking into the bookstore, wraps around the bookstore and provides an interior access to the rear, open, garage area. Access doors from the hallway to the rear garage area and the access driveway are wood frame with three horizontal wood panels and upper light.

The driveway to the rear garage area has a corrugated metal ceiling, a masonry west wall, an eastside sheet rock wall, and a 2x4 and 2x12 wood staircase (with a landing), which accesses the southwest end of the second story. The rear of the first story is a large, open, garage area with masonry walls to the east, west, and north. The ceiling is 2x12 joists. The upper floor is supported by large steel I-beams supported by eight-inch-diameter, 4x4, and reinforced concrete support posts. A 2x4 and 2x12 wood stairway to the rear of the garage provides a northeast end access to the second floor.

The second floor is one open room with interior masonry walls, a 2x6 floor, and east-west running steel I-beam roof supports with shallow 2x10 trusses. The westside windows are wood frame, double hung, 1/1 and 2/1.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Areas of Significance: Transportation, Commerce,
Architecture

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1918/21 - 1946

Significant Person(s): n/a

Significant Dates: 1921

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: not known

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Studebaker Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C. It was constructed as and was an automobile dealership/garage and functioned in that capacity during the historic period. As such, it is one of the few buildings remaining in downtown Missoula that was clearly associated with the advent of the automobile industry in the area. It is an example of a business that was a part of the major societal transition from horse to automobile, with the first owner operating a livery stable and automobile storage facility simultaneously. By 1922, this business was listed in the Polk's Missoula City and County Directory under the heading "Automobile Dealers, Garages, Livery and Repairs," indicating the transitory nature of the period. Most people who owned automobiles in these early years, stored them at garages where they could be maintained and protected from the winter elements. Spaces in livery stables usually rented from \$10 - \$15 per month and often included lessons in driving provided by the proprietor. Maintenance of batteries and heating/cooling systems, which were not very technically advanced, proved a chore for most owners and thus created a demand for such services. Nagle's was one of the earliest of the automobile-related business along this two block stretch of west Main Street, which would eventually become Missoula's "Gasoline Alley," with at least six automobile-related businesses. Part of this heritage still remains with the National-Register-listed Zip Building at 251 West Main, Reynold Radiator at 233 West Main, and the former Onley Motors at 300 West Main, which is presently being rehabilitated to serve as an antique automobile repair and display facility.

The Studebaker property meets the integrity of location criteria for independent listing in the National Register as addressed by the registration requirements of Section IV of the Missoula Multiple Properties nomination. It is closely associated with the context of the commercial development of the city center within the historic period of 1880 to 1940. The Studebaker Building has a strong sense of *setting and location, integrity of design, materials and workmanship, clear evidence of historic craftsmanship and a feeling and association* with the early automobile era. The proximity of the Studebaker Building to the Mullan Military Road (within a block of this property), the first federally funded road in Montana and a primary transportation thoroughfare through Missoula, connects the Studebaker Building to the historic transportation contexts recognized in Missoula's Comprehensive Preservation Plan. It also meets the criteria for design, materials and workmanship, especially with the historically sensitive rehabilitation now occurring. The significant facade details, such as the fixed industrial steel-frame windows that dominate the front and rear facades, and make a strong statement as to the commercial identity of this building, and are being restored and retained. Upon completion, this building will be a fine representation of an early automobile facility. The exterior upper floor integrity has already been restored to a significant degree. The overall integrity of design, materials and workmanship in this building evokes a definite sense of the historic time period, thus meeting another of the criteria necessary for additions to the multiple properties listing.

The Studebaker Building is also an excellent example of the commercial architecture of the early 1920s, showing a transition between the ornamental vernacular adaptations of the classic commercial designs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the more functional designs of the post 1920s. The somewhat unusual (for Missoula) crenelated, polychrome, corner parapet exhibits the expression of a deco "arc ziggurat," with its repeating arcs appearing like scoops of ice cream or cloud-like shapes. That corner element is somewhat similar to the mission style parapet of the

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Quartermaster's Stable building at Ft. Missoula, which was constructed some eight to ten years earlier in 1910. The lower facade is similar to designs used in other automotive buildings of that era, such as the Piersse Chevrolet (later Bennett Pontiac) Building in Great Falls, which was built in 1916, and the H.O. Bell Ford Building of Missoula at 605 South Higgins Avenue (demolished in 1989). The paving of the 200 block of West Main Street in 1914, forecast the development of this area as an automobile related corridor of the downtown business district. The building possesses excellent integrity of design and materials on the front upper and street level facade and at the rear of the building.

The building was constructed between 1918 and 1921 when the property was owned by Joseph P. Nagle. Nagle owned and operated a livery business at this address until the construction of the existing building. Subsequent owners included Mamie Clarkin Tischler, Nagle's niece (1922), Frank Thomas (1928), and Nybo Chevrolet (1930), which owned the property until 1960. The first known reference to this building serving as a garage is in the 1922 Polk City Directory, which references O'Brien (Harry A.) and Bourgeois (Arthur E.), garage. The 1921 Sanborn Map and the 1925 City Directory list Main Street Motors at this location. Subsequent occupants included Owl Taxi Cab and Transfer Co. (taxi cabs, U-drive cars, and auto storage) William Elmore, Proprietor (1929), Nybo Chevrolet Co., Inc. Louis A. Nybo, President (1930-1934). By 1936, the Nybo dealership was selling Studebaker cars and trucks and this building has come to be closely identified with that brand of automobile. The Missoula police force adopted Studebakers as their official vehicle and remained loyal to that company well into the 1950s. Nybo also advertised tires as of 1938 and shuttle trailers as of 1940.

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property: less than one

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	12	271700	5195100

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): Located in the SW ¼, SW ¼, NW ¼ of Section 21, T13N, R19W.

Verbal Boundary Description

The Studebaker Building is located on Lot 18, Block 22 of the C.P. Higgins Addition, Missoula, Montana.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the city lot upon which the historic building was erected.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: William A. Babcock	Allan Mathews	James R. McDonald	
organization: Past & Present	Missoula HP Officer	James McDonald Architects	date: December 1996
street & number: 2920 Salish Court	425 Ryman	224 N. Higgins	
telephone: (406) 549-9987			
city or town: Missoula	state: MT	zip code: 59801	

Property Owner

name/title: Michael Boehme	telephone:
street & number: 1396 Michigan Ave.	state: UT
city or town: Salt Lake City	zip code: 84105

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Missoula County Appraiser and Assessor, Plat Book to C. P. Higgins Addition.

Missoula County Clerk and Recorder, Deed Books Records, 1895-1946.

Polk, R.L., Missoula City Directories, 1903-1946.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1893-1950.